

## **Minutes of the Special Called DHT Board Meeting Thursday, December 15, 2011**

Present: Chico Goldsmith, Dolly MacIntyre, Judy Pruitt, Venny Torre, Olga Vieira, Linda Hertz, Ann Marie Clyatt, Lois Randall, Brian Alonso, Lilian Walby, and Becky Matkov. Francena Koch phoned in for the meeting.

A special called DHT Board meeting to discuss DHT nominating the Miami Herald building for historic designation by the City of Miami was held at the request of President Chico Goldsmith, with notice sent by e-mail and telephone. The meeting was held at the home of Arva and Bob McCabe prior to DHT's Holiday Party December 15, 2011.

President Chico Goldsmith called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

Information on the Miami Herald building was distributed, copied from the book Miami Architecture, A Guide to the Metropolitan Area, by Jeff Donnelly, Randall Robinson and Allen Shulman. Construction began on the building in 1960. It was designed by the architectural firm of Naess and Murphy, who modeled it after the 1957 Chicago Sun-Times Building. It is an excellent example of Mid-20<sup>th</sup>-Century subtropical Modernism and features an innovative hurricane-proof design. Architectural features include finely-crafted sun grilles, spandrel panels covered in mosaic tile, and a porte-cochere with classical proportion and Modern detailing. A colonnade of rectangular piers supports a canopy that rises three stories. The canopy is punctured by glazed round openings allowing sunlight to enter the grand lobby through a 30' high window.

Associated with the Herald Building have been outstanding leaders in Miami's modern history, including the Knight brothers, Alvah Chapman and David Lawrence. Twenty Pulitzer Prizes have been given to Herald writers in that building. Renowned authors Charles Whited, Dave Barry, Carl Hiassen and Edna Buchanan have all worked in the building.

Judy Pruitt stated that DHT should not take a position on the Genting gambling casino issue per se, but just on saving the Herald building. Venny Torre and Chico Goldsmith agreed.

Chico Goldsmith pointed out that the Herald building could be tied in with other nearby historic sites, including the Boulevard Shops on the Herald parcel, Trinity Cathedral, the Miami Woman's Club, the Sears Tower and the Freedom Tower.

Dolly MacIntyre said that DHT does have to understand that there will be consequences to our supporting historic designation, and that DHT will be perceived as opposing the Genting Group project and casino gambling, whether we say that or not, and there will be a big fight led by Genting.

Becky Matkov conveyed Don Worth's concern that though he thought the Herald building important, he thought it too late in the process to save it and that DHT should pick more realistic battles, and he was concerned that this might lead to an overturn of the City's preservation ordinance not requiring owner consent. She also conveyed the concern Matt Greer expressed that the time frame for discussing and deciding on this issue was too short. She also conveyed

the expressions of enthusiastic support she had received from preservationists Ellen Uguccioni, Randall Robinson and Teri D'Amico.

DHT Arva Parks joined the discussion and said you should just ask the question, does the Herald Building meet the criteria for historic designation. (See excerpt from the City of Miami's Preservation Ordinance below.) The Miami Herald Building obviously does.

The Historic Preservation (HP) Ordinance provides a process by which individual sites, historic districts, and archeological zones can be officially recognized as important elements of Miami's heritage if they meet the following qualifications:

- maintain significance in the historical, cultural, archeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the city, state, or nation.
- possess integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
- meet one or more of the specific criteria for significance detailed in Section 23-4(a) of the HP Ordinance, which include association with important people, events, or community developmental patterns or trends; representation of distinctive architectural styles, periods, or methods of construction; notable illustration of a prominent architect or builder's work; representation of outstanding quality or significant innovation or adaptation to the South Florida environment; and ability to yield information important in prehistory or history.

The Historic and Environmental Preservation Board (HEPB), a property owner, or a neighborhood association may initiate requests for designation. The HEPB conducts a preliminary evaluation as to whether the property appears to meet the criteria for designation. If it appears that the criteria have been met, the HEPB will direct City staff to prepare a designation report, which describes the property and how it meets the criteria for designation. The HEPB may require that the person initiating the request for designation conduct the necessary research to document the history and significance of the property. Once the designation report is complete, the HEPB will conduct a public hearing. The HEPB may then designate the property as either a historic site, an archeological zone, or in the case of a concentration or linkage of properties, a historic district.

Brian Alonso said that Dade Heritage Trust will lose credibility as a preservation leader if it does not act now and take a stand to save the Herald. Even if we do not prevail in the end, it is a battle we should undertake.

Dolly MacIntyre moved for Dade Heritage Trust to initiate the historic designation nomination process with the City of Miami as soon as possible. Judy Pruitt seconded the motion. The motion was approved 8-0, with 2 abstentions.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Submitted by Becky Matkov for Secretary Francena Koch

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